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DOCILITY AND FACULTIES OF DOMESTIC ANIMALS

Birds of prey teach their young not only to fly at and seize their prey, but also to catch it dexterously on the wing. M. Dureau Delamalle has observed falcons and hawks training their young in this manner. I lodged, said he, from 1794 to 1798, in one of the combles of the Louvre. The building was not then finished, and contained many birds of prey, which, not being molested in a city where it was not permitted to shoot them, were quite tame. My window looking into the square court of the Louvre, I had many opportunities of seeing the birds. At the time when the young were beginning to fly, I have often seen the old birds coming with a dead mouse or sparrow in their talons, hovering over the court, and calling to the young birds which remained in the nest. The latter came forth on hearing their parents, and fluttered under them in the court. The old birds then rose perpendicularly, apprizing their scholars of the circumstance by a loud cry, and let fall the prey, on which the young birds precipitated themselves. At the first lessons, with whatever care the old birds dropped the mouse or sparrow, so as to fall near the young ones, it was seldom that the latter caught the object; and, when they failed, the old birds came down like a ball, and carried it off before it had reached the ground. They then ascended to repeat the lesson, and never allowed their pupils to eat the prey until they had caught it in the air. When the young birds had become perfect at this exercise, the old ones brought them living birds, and repeated the above manœuvre until the former were able to catch them, and had consequently learned to provide for themselves.

BRITISH PEARL FISHERY ON THE RIVER CONWAY.

It may not be generally known that a pearl fishery exists at the present time in any part of Great Britain. The pearl muscle (*Mya margaritifera*) is found in abundance in the river Conway, in North Wales, and is collected by many of the natives, who obtain their livelihood entirely by their industry in procuring the pearls. When the tide is out, they go in several boats to the bar at the mouth of the river, with their sacks, and gather as many shells as they can before the return of the tide. The muscles are then put in a large kettle over a fire to be opened; and the fish taken out singly from the shells with the fingers, and put into a tub, into which one of the fishers goes bare-footed, and stamps upon them until they are reduced into a sort of pulp. They next pour in water to separate the fishy substance, which they call *solach*, from the more heavy parts consisting of sand, small pebbles, and the pearls, which settle in the bottom. After numerous washings, until the fishy part is entirely removed, the sediment is put out to dry, and each pearl separated on a large wooden platter, one at a time, with a feather; and when a sufficient quantity is obtained, they are taken to the overseer, who pays the fisher so much per ounce for them. The price varies from 1s. 6d. to 4s.; there are a number of persons who live by this alone; and where there is a small family to gather the shells and pick out the fish, it is preferable to any other daily labour. The pearls are generally a dirty white, sometimes blue, but never, it is believed, green or reddish.



A. Duncan, Esq. del.

BALLYLOUGHAN CASTLE.

Clayton, sc.

The ruins of Ballyloughan Castle, situated in the parish of Dunleckny, and barony of Idrone East, show it to have been a place of considerable strength and importance. Although at present roofless, the walls are in good preservation. It is of a square form, having two towers in the front; from the outer extremity of one of which to that of the other, being a distance of forty feet. The walls, about five feet thick, are in some places fifty feet high; they are of rude stone work, built in the most permanent manner. Fourteen stone steps conduct to the second floor, which rests on an arch. There are two flights of steps higher up, but they are in a state of dilapidation. An apartment about seven feet in height, with two windows, seems to have been in each of the towers: between the towers was the chief entrance, of arched, cut stone.

The appearances of the ground adjacent would indicate that the castle was formerly surrounded by a ditch. At a distance of eighteen yards to the west, stands another ruin, about thirty feet square. It has one stone-cased window, with holes for iron bars. The walls are five feet in thickness, and the structure is about twenty feet in height. About forty yards from the main building, to the north, is another ruin of small dimensions.

It formerly belonged to the Kavanaghs; and was occupied by Donagh Kavanagh, (second son of Murragh Ballylough, styled king of Leinster,) at the end of the sixteenth century. Shortly afterwards it passed into the possession of the Bagenal family, but is now on the property of Henry Bruen Esq.